16: Great Britain Admiralty -- 167 [2] G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116, 222, 252, 262

"The principal food of the Okhotsk Yakuts is dried fish; the inland tribes eat horse-flesh with avidity: they prefer it to beef, and rarely kill oxen for food. One special dish of theirs is called tar: it is a mixture of meat, fish, various roots, grass and the under-bark of spruce, fir, or larch, pounded in a mortar, this is put into skimmed-milk mixed with water to which is added a little flour (when available), and the whole is boiled into a kind of porridge. They gather their bark harvest in spring, when the sap is rising. Their special intoxicant is kumis (fermented mare's milk); they also drink large bowls of melted butter. Another of their delicacies is jelly extracted from reindeer-horns and flavoured with pine-bark. They collect huge quantities of berries and cedar-cones for food. They are also great consumers of tea."

24: Wrangell--38 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut
116, 222, 342, 354, 356

"The Jakutian habitations are of two kinds. In summer they dwell in what they call urossy, which are light circular tents formed of poles and covered with birch-bark, which they strip from the trees in large pieces. These are first softened by boiling, and then sewed together; and the outside of the urossy, from the colour of the bark being white,, have a very pleasing appearance, and at a distance resemble large canvass tents. In the summer they wander about with these in search of the finest pastures; and while their cattle are feeding, they themselves are incessantly employed in collecting the requisite store of winter forage.

At the approach of that season they take possession of their warm jurti. These are cottages formed of thin boards in the shape of a truncated pyramid, and covered thickly on the outside with sticks, grass, and mud. A couple of small opening, which admit a scanty light, are closed in winter with plates of ice, and in summer with fish-membrane or oiled paper. The floor is generally of beaten mud, and is sunk two or three feet below the surface of the ground; but people in better circumstances have it raised and boarded. There are wide permanent benches round the walls, which serve for seats in the daytime, and for sleeping on at night; and they are generally partitioned off for this purpose, according to the number of occupants. In the middle, but rather nearest the door, is the tschuwal, a kind of open hearth with a chimney up to the roof, where a fire is constantly kept burning. Clothing, arms, and a few household articles hang round the walls, but in general the greatest disorder and want of cleanliness prevail."

46: Cottrell--138-139 T-2 (1840) 1842 Yakut
116, 222, 231

"The cold prevents their keeping sheep, goats, pigs, or poultry. Close to the Frozen Ocean, they have neither pasturage, cattle, nor horses, in lieu of which they keep a large stock of dogs for their fishing expeditions, and in the [139] breeding season they take a great quantity of wild fowls' eggs. Hunting and fishing enable them to pay their taxes, and purchase some few necessaries of life."

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

224 aquatic and forest birds-duck, partridge, hazel-grouse, and so on. In the northern regions, the Yakuts engaged, and still engage, far more in hunting; for the Yakuts from these regions, just as for the Evenks, Evens, and Yukagirs, hunting is at times the chief means of subsistence. There, they chiefly hunt blue fox, hare, wild reindeer, elk, wild duck and geese, and so on.

The hunting techniques of the Yakuts hardly differed from those of other hunting peoples in Siberia. Instead of bows and arrows, guns (usually the flint type) came into use all over during the 19th century, and were used for squirrels, birds and other game; dogs were also used. A variety of traps and hunting equipment including blue-fox snares, bear-traps, hair nooses for hares and birds, and so on.

A purely Yakut method of hunting, unknown to any other people, is one in which an ox is used; the hunter skillfully approaches the game, hiding behind the ox, which he drives in front of him, then making the ox lie down, fires at the target from behind it. This method of hunting can be regarded as a modification of the well-known Tungus technique using a decoy reindeer as the bait; the modification is due to the transition from reindeer-breeding to pastoralism.

The Yakuts also had another method of hunting, unknown to the population of the taiga, which was a tradition among the steppe nomads; this consisted in driving the game on horseback, sometimes with dogs.

222 Gathering also played an important part as a subsidiary occupation, particularly among the poorer people. Pine sapwood (the inside layer of the bark) was usually gathered by women in the early spring and stored up for the winter in large quantities and in the dried form (from 10 to 100 poods per family, according to some sources).

In the northern regions where pines do not grow, they gathered larch sapwood, although it was not valued to the same degree, and various edible roots (lily, chekana) and green vegetables (wild onion, horseradish, sorrel, etc.).

Of far less importance in the economy of the Yakuts was berrying (blueberries, bog blueberries and so on).

241 648 The Yakuts only became familiar with soil cultivation fairly recently. At the time of the arrival of the Russians, agriculture was not to be found at all in Yakutiya, and even later it was only a few Russian settlers who engaged in it. Although in certain cases the Yakuts had been sowing crops since the end of the 17th century, it was only about the middle of the 19th century that agriculture became widespread in the Yakut economy, and this was chiefly due to the influence of the Russian peasants (particularly in the Olekminskiy Okrug).

The overall development of commodity relationships helped to speed up the development of agriculture and here and there ploughing was enforced by the administration.

At the end of the 19th century, the political exiles and the exiled Skoptsy helped to spread agriculture among the Yakuts.

Nevertheless, right up to the Revolution there was comparatively little farming among the Yakut population. They sowed some barley and less wheat. The tilling techniques were always very primitive.

Crafts and Trades

323 [53] The processing of raw materials and the making of different objects among the Yakuts chiefly retained the nature of domestic production for personal needs and not commerce. Woodworking and the making of